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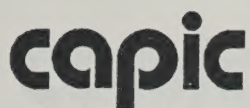
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1996

AGENDA / MINUTES
OF THE CENTRAL AREA PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION
COMMITTEE

FEB. 9, 1996



CENTRAL AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

a Subcommittee of the Planning and Development Committee

c/o CITY HALL, 71 MAIN STREET WEST, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, L8N 3T4

NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA

DATE: Friday, February 9, 1996

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: Room 233, 2nd Floor
Hamilton City Hall

URBAN MUNICIPAL

FEB 7 1996

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

AGENDA

1. Chairpersons' Remarks
2. Minutes of CAPIC Meeting of January 12, 1996
3. Gore Heritage Design Study
 - a) Presentation - Nina Chapple, Planning Dept.
 - b) Question and Answer, Discussion
4. Urban Design
 - a) Victoria Hall and MacKay Building
 - b) Actions by Staff and Sub-Committee
5. Business Arising
 - a) Current Focus, Membership and Action Plan
 - b) Economics of Downtown
6. Status Reports
 - a) Downtown Development Corporation
 - b) St. Marks' Use Study
 - c) CN Station
 - e) GO Transit
 - d) Official Plan Review
7. Members' Reports
8. Other Business
9. Next Meeting - Friday, March 8, 1996

If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Vanessa Grupe at 546-4160.



CENTRAL AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

a Subcommittee of the Planning and Development Committee

c/o CITY HALL, 71 MAIN STREET WEST, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, L8N 3T4

MINUTES

CENTRAL AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

City Hall, Room 233

Friday, January 12, 1996

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Russell Elman - Outgoing Chairperson
Mary Pocius - Incoming Chairperson
Gil Simmons
Art Lomax
Gerry Kennedy
Ron Faichney
Paul Ortmann
John Eyles
Karen Wood
Scott Maltman
Greg Fraleigh

Durand Neighbourhood Association
International Village BIA
North End Neighbourhoods
Hamilton Automobile Club
Metropolitan Hamilton Real Estate Board
Senior Citizens Council
Stinson Community Association
McMaster University
Physically Disabled Committee
Corktown Neighbourhood Association
Citizen-at-Large

REGRETS

Alderman Caplan
James Wilson
Graeme McTaggart

Alderman, Ward 1
Senior Citizens Council
Downtown Hamilton BIA

STAFF AND OTHERS

Alderman McCulloch
Dave McCann
Bill O'Brien
Brenda Mitchell
Don Deas
Vladimir Matus
Bill Janssen
Ann Gillespie
Vanessa Grupe - Coordinator

Alderman, Ward 2
Parker Consultants Ltd.
Transportation Services - H.S.R.
Stinson Neighbourhood
Kirkendall Neighbourhood
Planning Department
Planning Department
Planning Department
Planning Department

1. Chairperson's Remarks

Russell Elman opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. Members of the Advisory Committee on GO Transit had been invited, and Gil Simmons introduced Brenda Mitchell and Don Deas from the committee. She asked that CAPIC Chairperson be added as an agenda item.

2. Minutes of December 8, 1995 CAPIC Meeting

Concerning item 3 b) on page 2, it was noted that tax relief cannot be done. Ann Gillespie clarified that for the Gore Park area, tax relief is being considered as one option. **Motion:** It was moved by John Eyles and seconded by Mary Pocius that the minutes of the December 8, 1995 CAPIC meeting be adopted. **Carried.**

3. GO Transit - Status and Plans

a) GO Centre

Dave McCann, Parker Consultants Ltd., gave an overview of the design and status of the Hamilton GO Centre, including the following:

- Hunter St. frontage will have parking, interlocking brick sidewalks, trees, lighting, canopies on building;
- James and John St. will have stairs from sidewalks, up to platform. City, with GO Transit funding, has added bright lighting, screening;
- All doors, washrooms and office tower sized for disabled access; elevator from concourse to platform for access; every 5th GO car is wheelchair accessible, and stops within a 25 ft. radius;
- Taxi parking on Hunter St. face on west side; also some on east side;
- Passenger drop-off on Hunter St. both sides; also Haymarket St. to south, with access through bus area, covered by metal canopy; and,
- Opening expected in Spring, with May 29 as possible date.

During the discussion period which followed, several comments, suggestions and concerns were raised by committee members, as follows:

- Taxi parking spots not provided at rear, although taxis could stop on Haymarket with cars; felt a taxi spot needed at rear; concerns about rear pedestrian access;
- No on-site parking for transit users, while there is free parking at Aldershot Station; concerned no parking will reduce use of station;
- Questions about location of push buttons on front doors; and type of surface materials for front concourse; obstructions for disabled;
- Concerns that Hunter St. frontage should be main drop-off area, not rear door; landscaping out of character with building; City asked for landscaped front plaza;
- Station will be open to pedestrians for about 18 hours per day;
- Office tenants confirmed to date include professional offices; and,
- No traffic control devices proposed for Hunter at Hughson.

b) HSR Bus Connections with GO

Bill O'Brien, Director, Transportation Services, H.S.R., provided information on how H.S.R. and other buses will connect with the GO service:

- 3,000 trips per day are expected through the station, most of them on GO buses, which will also use it, at 10 min. intervals in peak;
- 500 trips per day will access the station using H.S.R., which is hoped to increase with time, so that this becomes the main access mode;
- H.S.R. carries 5,000 - 6,000 trips into CBD in peak period;
- Main bus access from Mountain is via James and John, more to be shifted to this;
- At present, can't stop buses under these bridges, due to columns, narrow lanes,
- Bus stops on n.w. corner James & Hunter; and e. side of John, s. of rail bridge;
- Want to reconstruct James and John St. bridges to full span structures. This would allow better bus access, since buses could stop under bridges;
- Hughson St. is seen as primary pedestrian corridor between GO Station and Gore;
- H.S.R. ticket office will be located in GO Station, with customer services; will close Catharine St. ticket office;
- Fares will be integrated, will have common bus pass, so GO riders with H.S.R. sticker can travel free on all H.S.R. buses;
- McMaster bus will have a bus stop in GO Station, at rear; as will DARTS; later so will Ancaster, Dundas H.S.R. buses likely have stop there;

Questions and comments about the H.S.R. service included the following:

- Hunter St. is not proposed to carry any H.S.R. buses in front of station, at present;
- All inter-city buses will come into GO Station, but B-Line bus will not;
- H.S.R. buses cannot back up in operations, have a blind spot. Thus they cannot use finger bays in GO Station, can only use the few side bays at south of station;
- May bring York Blvd bus into GO Station; it provides good coverage in CBD;
- A new bus stop on west side of James, at bridge, would be unsafe for pedestrians;
- Rebuilding of James and John St. bridges could be 20 years away;
- Concerns about safety for pedestrians crossing rear bus area; and,
- Opening ceremonies for Station will likely be mid-day in spring; Dave McCann will pass along comments about celebrating first incoming trains, spur to CBD.

c) Regional Transportation Review

Bill O'Brien provided an update on this study. There has been extensive public consultation since June, 1995. Staff are compiling the results of this phase, and preparing a report to Regional Council within the next 2 or 3 months. The debate about 1 or 2 tier government has slowed down the process- the organizational issues are related to this. Members said they hope seniors bus pass price will remain low. An increase of \$20 per year is being considered, to \$135 per year. Cash bus fare is now \$1.70; pass \$1.35.

4. Urban Design

a) Victoria Hall and MacKay Building

The ad-hoc committee on this matter recommended at the last meeting of CAPIC is being set up. It was endorsed by LACAC, who have appointed two members. Other members are being sought from the private sector, and the committee will meet soon. The owner continues to push for de-designation. The project manager for the Courthouse said there is no need for office space in addition to the Courthouse itself, now being renovated.

b) Report of Sub-Committee and Other Actions

Vanessa Grupe reported on progress on the various design initiatives being pursued, including the meeting of urban design staff from various municipalities. Contact names for some GTA staff involved in design are being forwarded from Mississauga.

Vladimir Matus noted that a development permit system is being introduced in Toronto. This is a planning process which substantially simplifies the conventional zoning approach, and the years of associated approvals, and is thus attractive to developers. Vladimir offered to explain this approach, and how it differs from the current zoning process, if members are interested. CAPIC may want to promote this approach. He can send out reading materials to members, and discuss it at a future meeting, if desired.

5. Business Arising

- a) Chairperson and Vice Chair - Gil Simmons had brought this item forward, since she felt it was time this matter be resolved. She suggested we receive any further nominations today, and then vote. With Gil Simmons as nominating chair, Mary Pocius was nominated by Greg Fraleigh, seconded by Ron Faichney. Mary agreed to run. Russell Elman was nominated by Art Lomax, seconded by Gerry Kennedy, but Russell declined to run. In this manner, since they were no other nominations, Mary Pocius became the new CAPIC Chairperson.

Further nominations for Vice Chairperson were invited. Gerry Kennedy nominated Greg Fraleigh, but he declined. There were no other nominations for Vice Chairperson. This position will be filled later.

Mary thanked Russell for all his work in the years he has chaired CAPIC. Russell said that CAPIC has always tried to resolve issues, and he hopes this will continue. The committee has worked for the common good, not the vested interests of each member. Mary asked Russell to continue in the chair for the balance of the agenda.

- b) CAPIC Goals, Priorities and Action Plan for 1996 - Vanessa distributed copies of the current action plan, as revised at recent meetings. This was felt to be satisfactory, although there may be further changes.
- c) Economics of Downtown - John Eyles and Gil Simmons had met with Mr. Harrison of McMaster for a preliminary discussion on this matter, instead of Peter George. There may be potential for him to meet with CAPIC. Pamela Blaise, an economist at the

University of Toronto, was also suggested as a speaker. She has been in the news recently about Toronto issues. We may wish to invite her to meet with CAPIC first, and then hold a public forum. A copy of the talk Frank Lewinberg gave at the CAPIC public forum could be sent to her.

- d) Advisory Committee on GO Transit - Gil Simmons asked whether this committee would continue to meet. She felt the staff should be in touch with members about the status of GO work, and meetings should be held. Vladimir Matus noted the charrette held on the GO Area, which addressed the planning implications of the station. The results of this study are now being incorporated into neighbourhood plans, such as Corktown. Russell said the committee should focus on the stations' interface with the neighbourhoods.

Art Lomax feels the City is not well served by the GO Station design, especially the rear entrance which he feels provides inadequate and unsafe pedestrian access. A bridge for people to pass over the bus area had been suggested. Other concerns included the front building face and amenities. Gil asked what followup had been done by staff regarding the comments on the station design provided by the Advisory Committee and others. Vanessa noted that there had been two or more reports to Planning Committee on these comments, which were forwarded to GO Transit.

- e) Planning Department Newsletter - The Planning News first issue was distributed to members. This publication, edited by Mary Lou Tanner, is intended to keep citizens informed about the Department's work, and has received much positive feedback.
- f) Planning Legislation Update - Bill Janssen noted that Bill 20 makes greenfields development easier. There are many changes, such as certain decisions are no longer appealable to the O.M.B.; and there are shorter timeframes for approval. Some say the legislation has been rolled back to what it was like in the early 1980's.
- g) Westdale Housing Issue - Paul Ortmann at the last meeting had requested information about monster homes and related planning issues in Westdale. Staff provided him with a package of information, which is summarized in the newsletter distributed to all.
- h) Official Plan Review - Vanessa provided a brief overview of this study, which is summarized in the newsletter. The various information brochures are presently being prepared, and the public outreach phase will begin in the spring.

6. Status Reports

- a) Downtown Development Corporation - Bill Janssen outlined recent D.C.D.C. initiatives:
- request for tax relief for businesses;
 - request to eliminate parking for residential uses in the downtown;
 - request for market value study for student housing, related to Lister Block; and,
 - Feb. 7 D.C.D.C. workshop with facilitator, to set directions, actions, & priorities.

The Downtown Initiatives Committee is a staff committee, chaired by Victor Abraham, Director of Planning and Development, also working on downtown issues, and recently asked to be a support group to the D.C.D.C.

CAPIC has an important role to play in supporting and complementing the D.C.D.C. There are many issues, and much of the work will be done by other groups. The development permit approach, and the economics of downtown, are two examples of areas CAPIC is pursuing independently at present, of which D.C.D.C. could be informed.

- b) St. Marks' Use Study - Ann Gillespie reported on the January 12 public meeting, held to obtain public input on the use of this City owned building as a multi-purpose facility. Staff were very pleased by the attendance and response. Many agencies may be seeking meeting space, such as arts groups; Seniors Council; Volunteer Centre; Scouting groups and others. Interested parties were asked to complete a user survey form by early Feb. Funding for renovations is to be determined and subject to budget process. Users fees need to be set. Ron Faichney reported on the Jan. 12 meeting and possible user groups.
- c) CN Station - Filming is now underway for a major movie at the Station. Considerable renovations were done for this purpose, including painting; carpet removed; terrazzo floors cleaned; and a fake staircase added. LACAC has asked that the heat be left on after the movie is finished, to prevent further damage to the building.

7. Other Business - None.

8. Members Reports

- a) Ron Faichney said the building in poor condition he mentioned at the previous meeting was at the south-west, (not north-west) corner of James and Cannon. He also likes the Gore fountain project; and feels there should be a large mall in the core.
- b) Mary Pocius asked whether a demolition application had been made for the former Ammendolia property at 266-280 King St. E., which has not. There have been two fires in it, and the building may be beyond repair.

The Assessment hearing was to have been in December. The definition of "vicinity" is critical - business owners feel the vicinity should be the whole Region, rather than the building next store, as the hearing officer feels. The O.M.B. may be the solution. There is a rumour that many stores in Jackson Square are closing soon when their leases expire.

- c) Russell Elman said the James Mountain Road project has caused polarization between lower City and Mountain residents, in discussion about how much to widen the road.

9. Next Meeting The next regular CAPIC meeting is scheduled for February 9, 1996.

10. Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m. vg/CAPMINJA.96

CITY OF HAMILTON

- INFORMATION -

DATE: 1996 January 16
TC-CAP(C)

REPORT TO: Tina Agnello, Secretary
Planning and Development Committee

FROM: Mary Pocius
Chairperson *Vanessa Gupe for*
Central Area Plan Implementation Committee

SUBJECT: Support for Preservation of Victoria Hall and McKay Building
From Central Area Plan Implementation Committee (CAPIC)

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The Central Area Plan Implementation Committee (CAPIC) has expressed its support for the preservation of Victoria Hall and the MacKay Building. CAPIC has also asked that an ad-hoc working committee be established on the matter of Victoria Hall and the MacKay Building, to identify and carry out actions to help ensure the preservation of these heritage landmarks.

At the November 10, 1995 meeting of CAPIC, concerns were expressed by members about the threatened demolition of these buildings, of which Victoria Hall is a National Historical Site. Two motions were passed, reflecting CAPIC's long-standing concerns about the buildings.

It was moved and carried that Victoria Hall and the MacKay Building need to be preserved, due to their historical value and contribution to the King Street streetscape. This motion was to be forwarded to the Planning and Development Committee and Council. It was noted that CAPIC is acting in its urban design role, as directed by Council, in commenting on this issue. This matter is to be added to the mandate of CAPIC's urban design sub-committee.

In addition, it was also moved and carried that CAPIC help to mobilize public opinion and support to preserve Victoria Hall and the MacKay Building, which are felt to be of vital importance to the City. CAPIC will help to create awareness; generate ways of preserving the building; help find the means and legitimate use(s) for the building; and help to preserve the facade as necessary. Resource

people are to be identified to assist with this, and an action plan prepared. Any available information on Victoria Hall or similar demolition requests was asked to be brought to CAPIC.

At the December 8, 1995 meeting of CAPIC, the above-noted motions were reconfirmed, and it was noted they would be conveyed to Planning and Development Committee in January, 1996. In addition, background information was provided by LACAC staff about these buildings, and there was further discussion concerning their status.

Due to the extent of concerns expressed, and the desire to take action, it was recommended that an ad-hoc committee be established, consisting of members of LACAC, CAPIC, staff and other interested parties, to identify and carry out actions to help preserve these unique heritage buildings. Gil Simmons and Scott Maltman agreed to serve as CAPIC representatives on this ad-hoc committee. A similar approach has been used for other heritage buildings and various issues, where special purpose committees have been established to consider options and solutions.

This suggestion for an ad-hoc committee on Victoria Hall was forwarded to the December 11, 1995 meeting of LACAC, for consideration. LACAC endorsed this idea, and two members agreed to participate on the committee, namely John Mokrycke and Rob Hamilton. Planning Department staff are presently identifying other people who would be useful resource persons for the committee, such as a developer, real estate agent, and a business owner. It is anticipated the committee will meet begin to meet during the next week or so, prior to the end of January, 1996.

vg/
CAPVHP&D.96

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CENTRAL AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
a Subcommittee of the Planning and Development Committee
c/o CITY HALL, 71 MAIN STREET WEST, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, L8N 3T4

NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA

DATE: Friday, March 8, 1996
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: Room 233, 2nd Floor
Hamilton City Hall

AGENDA

1. Chairpersons' Remarks
2. Minutes of CAPIC Meeting of February 9, 1996
3. Development Permit Approach
 - * a) Presentation - Vladimir Matus, Planning Dept. *
 - b) Question and Answer, Discussion
4. Urban Design
 - a) Report of Sub-Committee and Staff
 - b) Victoria Hall and MacKay Building
 - c) GO Transit
5. Business Arising
 - a) Administrative Matters
 - b) Economics of Downtown
6. Status Reports
 - a) Downtown Development Corporation
 - b) St. Marks' Use Study
 - c) CN Station
 - d) Gore Heritage Design Study
 - e) Official Plan Review
7. Members' Reports
8. Other Business
9. Next Meeting - Friday, April 12, 1996

* The main agenda item is the Development Permit Approach, as an alternative to conventional zoning. Please review the enclosed reading material carefully prior to the meeting, and come prepared for a discussion on the pros and cons.

If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Vanessa Grupe at 546-4160.



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MINUTES

CENTRAL AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

City Hall, Room 233

Friday, February 9, 1996

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Mary Pocius - Chairperson
Alderman Caplan
Russell Elman
Gil Simmons
Ron Faichney
James Wilson
Paul Ortmann
Graeme McTaggart
Karen Wood
Gerry Kennedy

International Village BIA
Alderman, Ward 1
Durand Neighbourhood Association
North End Neighbourhoods
Senior Citizens Council
Senior Citizens Council
Stinson Community Association
Downtown Hamilton BIA
Physically Disabled Committee
Metropolitan Hamilton Real Estate Board

REGRETS

Scott Maltman
John Eyles
Art Lomax
Greg Fraleigh

Corktown Neighbourhood Association
McMaster University
Hamilton Automobile Club
Citizen-at-Large

STAFF AND OTHERS

Yvonne Potruff
Manuel Ventura
Vladimir Matus
Nina Chapple
Vanessa Grupe - Coordinator

Beasley Neighbourhood
Beasley Neighbourhood
Planning Department
Planning Department
Planning Department

1. **Chairperson's Remarks**

Mary Pocius opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m., asked all present to introduce themselves, and welcomed the two new members from Beasley, Yvonne Potruff and Manuel Ventura.

2. Minutes of January 12, 1996 CAPIC Meeting

Motion: It was moved by Gil Simmons and seconded by Karen Wood that the minutes of the January 12, 1996 CAPIC meeting be adopted. **Carried.**

3. Gore Heritage Design Study and Other Heritage Matters

a) Presentation and Discussion on Gore Heritage Study

Nina Chapple, Heritage Planner with LACAC staff, of the Planning Department, provided a presentation on this study, which had been recently initiated by LACAC staff at the request of Mayor Morrow. As background to the study, the Mayor's Task Force in 1994 recommended a 7 point program, including a designated heritage district in the downtown to protect the streetscape. The Hamilton Downtown 1995 report of the Economic Development Dept. had 3 key objectives, one of which was a designated heritage area. It is felt there is a great opportunity to conserve a superb historic streetscape.

The goals of the study are to create a lively, attractive and energetic downtown core; to create a positive image of the Gore and the City; and to capitalize on the city's own distinct identity and unique character.

The study focuses on the Gore streetscape, and concentrates on 3 aspects:

- storefronts, signage and sidewalks - establishes vitality of area, focus on use;
- architectural framework - upper stories - focus on architecture and history;
- in-fill buildings - ensures quality of Gore respected, focus on compatibility.

A three step method is applied to each component of the Gore streetscape:

1. provides analysis of existing condition, noting beneficial and detrimental aspects;
2. provides a future vision, thereby establishing a common goal;
3. discusses potential guidelines and incentives to achieve future vision.

Slides were shown, illustrating the history and significance of the Gore area, with themes such as rare garden park; place for gathering and celebration; continuous enclosing wall; very high density is presently permitted; threat of demolition; renovations now mean tax increases. Display panels indicated "before" and "after" versions of the building facades for each of the blocks, showing the original facades restored, and modern signs removed.

If a common vision is adopted for the maintenance / enhancement of the Gore Streetscape, then a coordinate plan can be carried out, including:

- Establish Special Policy Area for the Gore;
- Guidelines for Building Improvement;
- Urban Design Guidelines (improvements for pedestrians);
- Funding Assistance Programs (deferment of tax increases);
- Development Permit System (guidelines for building envelope, signage, infill)
- Other eg. demolition control; coordinating economic development, etc.

During the question and answer period, points such as the following were raised:

- ownership of buildings - must go after the owners to sell them on this approach;
- on-street parking - is this being considered;
- property standards - enforced on a complaint basis;
- buses - what should their role be in the core - how visible ?
- heritage district - what type of one to create ?
- development permit approach - to be discussed at next CAPIC;
- deal with whole block, not just facade;
- implications of any tax cuts on City revenues.

b) Victoria Hall and MacKay Building

The report to Planning and Development Committee, dated January 16, 1996 and included in the agenda package, indicated CAPIC's support for the preservation of these buildings, and for the formation of an ad hoc committee.

Nina Chapple noted that a very productive meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee had been held on January 22, 1996. David House, Director of Project Development, Adason Properties Ltd., had provided insights into rehabilitation of other heritage buildings, and proposed a course of action. He said the City needs to first purchase or expropriate; then prepare a detailed Request for Proposals, for bids on costs of clearly-defined renovations. Options include preserving only the facade, to front a new building; renovating only the first 2 floors; and renting to Tourism Services or the Downtown Development Corporation.

Alderman McCulloch had said the owner was willing to exchange the property for 2 City properties. He offered to talk with the Mayor about the possible land exchange, and to set up a meeting with the Mayor and owner about this. He also offered to set up a meeting with the Mayor and Regional Chairman to work out a rental agreement for Regional office use.

c) St. Marks' Use Study

Submissions were being received following the January 12 public meeting, up to the deadline of February 16. Many interesting proposals had been received, for such uses as theatre; seniors drop-in centre, etc.

d) Heritage Day

Monday, February 19 was Heritage Day. All were invited to the ceremony in the Council Chambers at City Hall at 12:00 noon. The ceremony is to be a special one, due to the Sesquicentennial, with the Minister of Culture attending. There will be several speakers, special guests, awards and presentations.

4. Urban Design

a) Actions by Staff and Sub-Committee

Staff have contacted urban design professionals from many other municipalities, who have generally expressed a great deal of interest in meeting as a group to discuss design issues, solutions and success stories. Staff will proceed to set up this meeting. Several ideas are being reviewed for public education events, including a film which gives a light-hearted approach to modern design, which would be shown along with a panel discussion. The next meeting of the Urban Design Sub-Committee, to discuss these and other actions, will be held on February 21, 1996.

The development permit approach, as an alternative to conventional zoning, will be discussed at the next CAPIC meeting. Reading material will be sent out in advance, and Vladimir will provide a presentation on aspects of this approach. Members are strongly encouraged to review the background reading which will be sent out. Russell Elman asked for information also to be provided on the present site plan application process, for the sake of comparison.

5. Business Arising

a) Current Focus, Membership and Action Plan

A report dated January 30, 1996 was forwarded to the Planning and Development Committee (copies distributed), outlining the current membership, focus, and goals for 1996. Sherry Wang, citizen-at-large, has tendered her resignation in a recent letter, due changes in her employment. Several people were suggested to replace her, including Helen Kirkpatrick and Beverly Globus.

Motion: It was moved by Alderman Caplan and seconded by Gil Simmons that Helen Kirkpatrick be invited to join CAPIC as citizen-at-large. **Carried.**

b) Economics of Downtown

Gil Simmons and John Eyles had previously suggested Peter George at McMaster, or Pamela Blaise, as good speakers or resource people. Dr. David Foote, demographer and economist from the University of Toronto, was recommended by Mary Pocius. He was speaker at a business development seminar, and was excellent. He could be asked to speak at a public forum. Mary has demographics and forecasts he provided, and his phone number.

6. Status Reports

a) Downtown Development Corporation

Gil Simmons reported the all day visioning session had been held Wed. February 7. There is a list of the top 10 issues, of which the highest priority is tax reform, and the second is housing downtown, which could take different forms. Other issues include heritage, parking, transit, traffic flow. There will be much action now that priorities are set. Mary Pocius felt that CAPIC will be a very important source for research and information as input to the DCDC, as in the case of the public forums on downtown.

The Province has been reluctant to set a precedent in Hamilton regarding taxation, but the matter is being pursued, and the amount of annual lost revenue is a strong argument for tax reform. The City is trying to create an economic zone or activity area in which monies can be put into renovating buildings, rather than paying increased taxes due to improvements.

b) CN Station

Nina Chapple has met with the person who controls heating, who has agreed to keep the heat after the movie, to help maintain the building. The Mayor sent a letter to the president of C.N., asking for heating. There are rumours of a sale to a Hamilton firm, which must yet be approved by Ottawa.

c) GO Station / Advisory Committee on GO Transit

LACAC is planning a tour of the GO Station on February 26, which may be open to CAPIC members. The opening date may be May 29, or perhaps May 8 when Prince Charles is in Hamilton.

Gil Simmons noted that the Advisory Committee on GO Transit has not met since June, due to staff shortages, and that this committee's role could be focused more on the area surrounding the station, which is largely a design matter. Therefore, she suggested it be merged with the Urban Design Sub-Committee which has been meeting almost monthly.

Motion: It was moved by Gil Simmons and seconded by Karen Wood that the Urban Design Sub-Committee and the Advisory Committee on GO Transit be amalgamated.

Carried. The mandate of this committee is to be clearly defined.

The lack of parking at the Hunter St. GO Station was discussed. Use of the Health Building for this is being discussed again. There are still many people who assume that there will be parking provided. CAPIC's positions on these matters need to be restated for the benefit of all.

d) Official Plan Review

Vanessa said the information brochures are still being prepared, and should be finalized by mid-March. The public outreach phase is being designed, and will include meetings with numerous community groups and mall displays.

7. Members Reports

a) Ron Faichney felt it is important to get moving on tax reform, so that the \$22 in taxes per square foot in downtown does not continue.

b) Graeme McTaggart noted the Feb. 23 public meeting on the removal of the parking requirements for downtown residential uses. He felt this would be supported by some developers and parking lot owners, but had some concerns about who would want it. Russell Elman said it is a matter of equity - should you park in your own building ?

c) Paul Ortmann said the Stinson Neigh. Assoc'n AGM will be on Feb. 19, and will kick off the neighbourhood plan review. Brenda Mitchell will be going to Ottawa to present

the criteria developed regarding dangerous offenders. They continue to work with the police, and are holding the 5th annual Night Out this week. A teen centre is proposed.

- d) James Wilson enjoyed the letter to the Spectator by Ernie Geisel, feels he has some useful knowledge, and would like to see him on CAPIC. Russell said perhaps we could invite him to a meeting, to speak with us.
 - e) Russell Elman asked about the status of James Mountain Road, which will be checked.
 - f) Gil Simmons said BARC is trying to convince the federal government to improve the Hamilton Beach lighthouse.
 - g) Yvonne Potruff said Beasley is having an event on Feb. 17 with Neighbourhood Watch.
 - h) Gerry Kennedy felt existing parking regulations are confusing, and might be explained. It is proposed that the April CAPIC meeting address the issue of parking.
 - i) Karen Wood noted there is a new sub-committee of Pathways (a sub-committee of Physically Disabled Cttee), to develop standards for pedestrian access in outdoor spaces.
 - j) Mary Pocius said there is a proposal for the Ammendolia property at 266-280 King St. E., to develop commercial offices and 120 rental apartments. This is a welcome turn for this building, which has dropped in value and been vacant for some time - eastern anchor.
8. Next Meeting The next regular CAPIC meeting is scheduled for March 8, 1996.
9. Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

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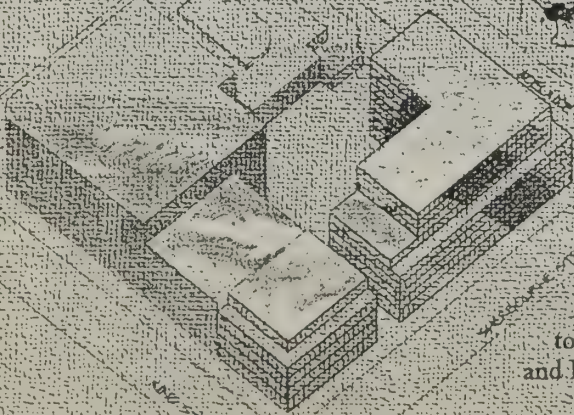
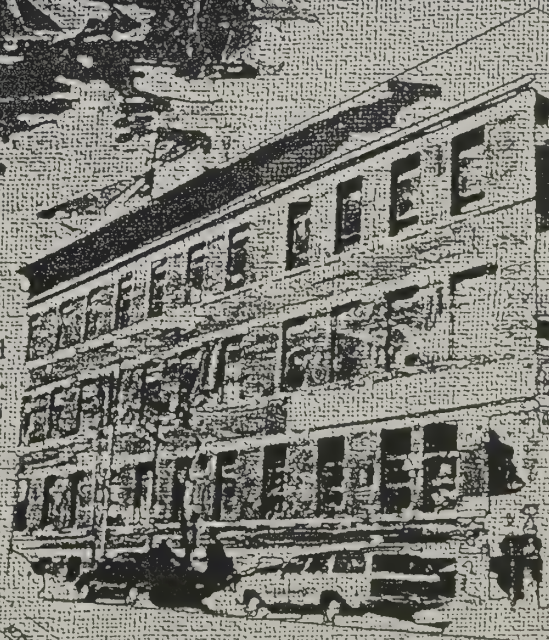
Toronto inherits many problems from the remains of an obsolete, industrialized, downtown area.

TIME FOR CHANGE: TORONTO DECIDES THAT LESS IS MORE IN THE CHALLENGE TO REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN

Toronto may have found the key to revitalizing large areas of downtown adjacent to the financial core.

By Clara Miller
Page 3

There is little demand for old factory and warehouse spaces. But there's a strong demand to explore new uses for them.



The proposal is to do away with use restrictions and rely instead on straightforward built-form controls, shifting the emphasis to as-of-right development in the King-Spadina and King-Parliament areas.

Byte-size market share for retailing in cyberspace? Brenton Toderian argues that planners need to take account of the burgeoning demand.....p.5

Time to test our mettle. Policy committee needs input from members to shape OPPI involvement in massive legislative restructuring. Editorialp.7

New Zealand precedent for coherent planning system worthy of investigation, suggests Nigel Richardson in Open Letter to Mike Harrisp.8

Let them eat tea and biscuits. Mario Bozzo reviews the British experience with privatized public transit.p.11

David Douglas' Community Economic Development in Canada makes a significant contribution says John Farrow. You can buy the book through OPPI.p.22

TIME FOR CHANGE: TORONTO DECIDES THAT LESS IS MORE IN THE CHALLENGE TO REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN

by Glenn Miller

Is the prospect of being able to utilize a building for a use other than one permitted in the zoning by-law without having to submit to a tortuous, multi-year process enough to rekindle the economic spark in Toronto's downtown core? To judge from the unprecedented support for a new proposal authored by Mayor Hall and the City's Planning and Development department, Toronto may have found the key to revitalizing large areas of downtown adjacent to the financial core.

In a nutshell, the proposal is to do away with use restrictions (other than noxious uses) and rely instead on straightforward built-form controls, shifting the emphasis to as-of-right development in the King-Spadina and King-Parliament areas (see map). "I see this as a motivating force to stimulate investment," says the Mayor. "In these two areas alone there are millions of dollars worth of underutilized infrastructure just sitting there. There is also a real concern that our current processes and ways of regulating land use may actually be encouraging the demolition of vacant buildings to reduce the tax burden. That's why we're taking action."

To allay the concerns of those who feel that the City is about to commit an enormous folly, the approach is labelled experimental. Commissioner Robert Millward stresses that the current

category merits a different treatment.

To those who own property in the revitalization areas or consult for those that do, the effect of the changes is being likened to the Berlin Wall coming down. "This is huge," says one consultant. "This is the best thing to happen in this city in 20 years." Others point to problems with the current system of land use control and regulation that assume a building's original use will remain constant for the life of the building. The changes will allow a more flexible response to market conditions. The removal

of "stumbling blocks" in what is currently a "daunting" process is widely seen as beneficial.

Deputy Commissioner Paul Bedford calls the proposal, which is due back at Land Use Committee in January, a "fortuitous partnership" between the planning department and the work of a small committee established by Mayor Hall which was advocating urgent action to restore the City's economic health. Based on advice from the City's senior planning staff and members of her committee, who included such luminaries as Jane Jacobs, Ken Greenberg and Frank Lewinberg (partners with Berridge Lewinberg Greenberg Dark Gabor), developer Bobby

Eisenberg and Garry Stamm (president of Stamm Economic Research), the Mayor argues that "highly sophisticated, complex regulations no longer serve the City the way they were intended." Tools created to "control the flood" of economic investment need to be rethought, and replaced with

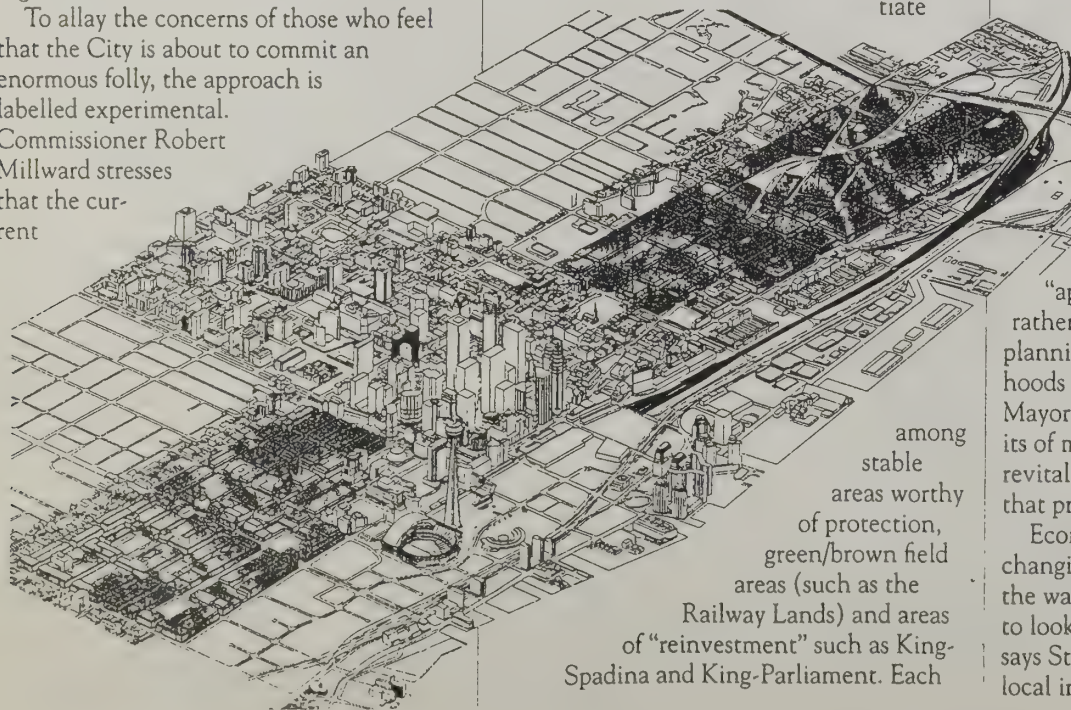
"approaches to regulation that stimulate rather than hinder reinvestment." Basic planning goals such as liveable neighbourhoods and safe, vibrant streets still hold, the Mayor stresses, as does her belief in the merits of mixed use. "If anything, the revitalization proposals seek to reinforce that principle," she notes.

Economist Garry Stamm insists that changing the process is only one step along the way to revitalizing the core. "You have to look at what makes investment possible," says Stamm. "The first priority is to improve local infrastructure. This includes providing



initiative should be seen in the context of his recent reorganization and streamlining of his department. The initiative is part of a new conceptual framework that he describes as "viewing the City through three distinct lenses." This is an approach that will allow

planners to differentiate



among stable areas worthy of protection, green/brown field areas (such as the Railway Lands) and areas of "reinvestment" such as King-Spadina and King-Parliament. Each

more effective access to and from downtown. The second is to completely revise tax policy. Some owners are currently paying one tenth of the building's value in annual taxes."

As head of a special task force comprised of several city departments, Bedford is directing an interdisciplinary team charged with the responsibility of coming up with

the new framework. Bedford's advice is "Keep it simple. Forget conventional thinking. This new hybrid is characterized by one word - mix." In Bedford's view, the issue of density is moot: the bigger concern is getting the right fit between existing buildings "which happen to be at a very attractive scale" and new construction.

"The density numbers will be probably be deleted from the plan and zoning by-law altogether," Bedford suggests. "But there will be greater reliance on using the zoning to specify built form, height and scale, and as a safeguard to protect light and views from facing windows rather than as a prescriptive tool."

As one developer commented in a letter of support for the proposals, customers looking to buy a condominium don't ask about the density of a project. They are more interested in the appearance, the level of amenities and other everyday matters. "Planning regulations should reflect such realities," suggested Murray Goldman, a developer with a respected track record in Toronto.

"Toronto desperately needs more eco-

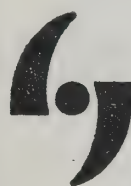
nomie activity," Bedford notes. "A city needs new investment to keep it liveable. By adopting a new approach, I hope we can find a way to provide certainty without encumbering investment, and allow planners to be facilitators of change."

Consultant Ken Greenberg agrees. He calls the proposals a "welcome intervention" that will "send a very strong message that Toronto is still a place to live and work, enabling people to use the city's resources to their best advantage." Indeed, the long list of letters received even includes support from developers without a direct financial interest in the trial areas who pledge to work with City staff to help put the proposed changes on a firm footing. Adds Greenberg, "What this initiative challenges at its root, is all concepts based on bean counting. The illusion of predictability leads to complete paralysis. We all need to adopt flexible ways of responding to change."

Another Toronto consultant, David Butler, president of the Butler Group, also supports the revitalization initiative, calling the move to a system that promotes economic and planning opportunities "positive and proactive." This opinion is echoed by Scott Burns, a partner at Hemson Consulting Ltd. As someone who has guided many clients through the maze of approvals in the study areas, Burns welcomes the increased flexibility as a way of "attracting re-investment." He suggests that at current property prices and lease rates the removal of the use zoning "risk factor" will result in reuse of existing buildings for much needed new activities.

Opponents of the scheme worry that removing use restrictions will drive out remaining industrial firms or cramp the style of areas like the theatre district. "There are many more critical variables affecting the viability of businesses than zoning," notes Bedford. This view is endorsed by Mayor Hall, who comments that if it is only zoning holding industrial jobs in place then "we're all paying a very high cost for that." Also, Burns notes that market pressure is not strong enough to result in wholesale change that would threaten existing industrial firms.

Seeing the role of industry as a prize to be retained within municipal boundaries at all costs is an approach that is quickly losing favour. This change in sentiment has been hastened by the recent deliberations of the GTA Task Force. Advice to the Task Force has emphasized that businesses need to be competitive in the regional economy



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of the GTA. The traditional protectionist approach of drawing circles around surviving job groupings with a zoning map is not going to make the businesses competitive if the location is wrong. With the forces of global change so strong, keeping tabs on the formation of new businesses for the purposes of shoe-horning them into outdated classifications is, in the words of a City staffer, "a mug's game."

As architect Sol Wassermuhl points out, "The great streetscapes of London and Paris do not reveal the kind of uses taking place behind the facades." He feels that greater reliance on design and built controls instead of land use will help reduce mass demolitions and further erosion of the tax

base.

As to the potential to create thriving new mixed use communities in the heart of downtown, Bedford suggests that although living downtown may not be for everyone, the prospects for positive change are good. "Residential in this kind of environment is self-regulating to a certain extent. There's a vibrancy associated with mixed use. If this new approach is successful in attracting residential conversions of some of the remarkable high-ceilinged buildings in either of these test areas, this - to me - is the essence of urban living. We need more city lovers," Bedford asserts.

Bedford's vision, supported by Commissioner Robert Millward as well as

Mayor Hall, is to be able to capitalize on prize assets such as Clarence Square, one of numerous pockets of classically proportioned "building blocks" that exemplify the highest standards of urban design and comfortably arranged public realm. His staff are currently working on schemes that illustrate the potential for positive change in time for January's Land Use meeting.

Glenn Miller is Editor of the Journal and Director of Applied Research at the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto. For details on a symposium on this subject scheduled to take place on January 19, 1996 see the Billboard.

Cities without zones

G+M

NOV. 8, 1995

CANADA'S largest cities were born in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, reached economic maturity in the early twentieth century and expanded after the Second World War. Since then, large parts of their downtown cores have become stranded, frozen in a permanent frost of industrial-age organization. Their manufacturing economies tend to move uptown, into exit-ramp Netherlands and suburban vacuums. Their manufacturing districts are reduced to lifeless museums.

Fortunately, problems sometimes beget solutions. Toronto's mayor, Barbara Hall, has recently become an outspoken advocate of an idea that could breathe new economic and social life into her city, and potentially into other downtown areas: the elimination of zoning controls. This is not a radical new idea. It has been promoted for decades by such urban visionaries as Jane Jacobs, John Sewell and the late Hans Blumenfeld (all of whom did their thinking in Toronto). It has won the support of city councillors on the right and left, and of residents rich and poor.

Why? On the most immediate level, because it turns moribund industrial neighbourhoods into usable communities that could help solve some of Toronto's most daunting problems. The dezoning proposal would initially apply to the semi-abandoned warehouse and sweatshop districts near the business core. It would allow conversion of office and light-industry space (of which Toronto has a glut) into residential space (of which Toronto has a shortage), among other uses. Toronto is badly in need of affordable rental housing and low-cost condominium space, and the conversion of old warehouses would help turn stagnant areas into pleasant, mixed communities.

But dezoning can hold more exciting promise, especially if cities expand the

idea:

- ♦ *Attracting business.* Zoning barriers were created during the 1950s to prevent noxious "smokestack" industries from impinging on residential communities. Today, urban industries are overwhelmingly of the keyboard-rattling variety, and the old zoning controls create a real impediment to locating new business downtown. City hall will still be able to halt hazardous land uses — but this will be the exception, not the rule.

- ♦ *Improving quality of life.* Rather than living in one sprawling, single-use area, shopping in another and commuting to work in a third, citizens will be able to interact in populous, multiuse communities. Instead of sprawling outward, cities can intensify and flourish inward, using well-established infrastructure much more efficiently.

- ♦ *Opening up housing markets.* Governments have traditionally solved housing crises by building social housing. This approach has largely failed to solve the problem, and in many cases is no longer affordable. Better, and more feasible, is to create housing opportunities by allowing existing space to become residential. Most cities place limits on what a "house" can be through lot- and building-size limitations, parking and single-family residency rules. Dezoning would expand the definition, grow and diversify the housing stock and lower the cost of rent and home ownership.

- ♦ *Levelling the playing field.* Zoning laws have never been absolute barriers. Wealthy developers have always been able to get around them by seeking exemptions in city hall and in court. Dezoning would open development up to those who have good ideas and beneficial ambitions, not just those who are adept at making back-room deals.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Loosen land use limits in city core

'Suppressed diversity is at the root of the current economic problems in downtown Hamilton'

By ROBERT J. MILLER
and LEAH D. WALLACE

RE: "What killed downtown Hamilton?" (Feb. 2).

We felt Ernie Geisel's broad contention that "downtown North America has become obsolete, dead beyond revitalization" is not accurate, particularly in relation to the city of Hamilton.

How would a truly "dead" downtown Hamilton appear? It almost happened 134 years ago.

In 1862 the Gore Bank refused to continue financing Hamilton's debt.

In response, the council reduced the police force to eight men, cut off all relief assistance, eliminated street lighting and shut off the Gore Park fountain.

To add to the humiliation, the bailiff auctioned the city hall furniture, the works department tools, the hospital furnishings and all the firefighting equipment.

Would the citizens of that era argue that downtown Hamilton of today is dead? Not very likely.

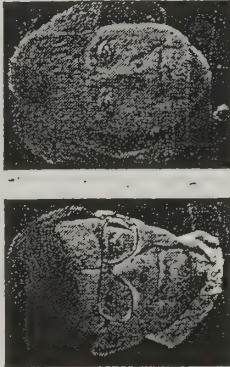
All for naught?

Downtown Hamilton has survived many ups and downs and has benefited from the attention of many visionaries over the years.

By calling it "dead," Mr. Geisel is implying that the efforts of Lloyd Jackson, Vic Copps, Jack MacDonald, Bob Morrow and the other architects of downtown Hamilton have all been for naught.

We are certain that no one can agree with that conclusion.

Perhaps we would do better to consider the fact that downtown Hamilton is not dead, but that it is evolving into something we cannot easily predict or control.



Robert J. Miller is a consulting planner with the firm Robert J. Miller & Associates Ltd. in Waterdown.

Leah D. Wallace is a heritage planner and chair of the Flamborough Local Architectural Advisory Committee (LACAC).

Old approaches to planning and zoning no longer appear to be working. Their inability to respond to the rapid changes of our times with any flexibility underlies a very fundamental problem with the system of land use.

The predictability of land use has been reduced to an illusion in the face of the paralysis afflicting parts of the downtown area.

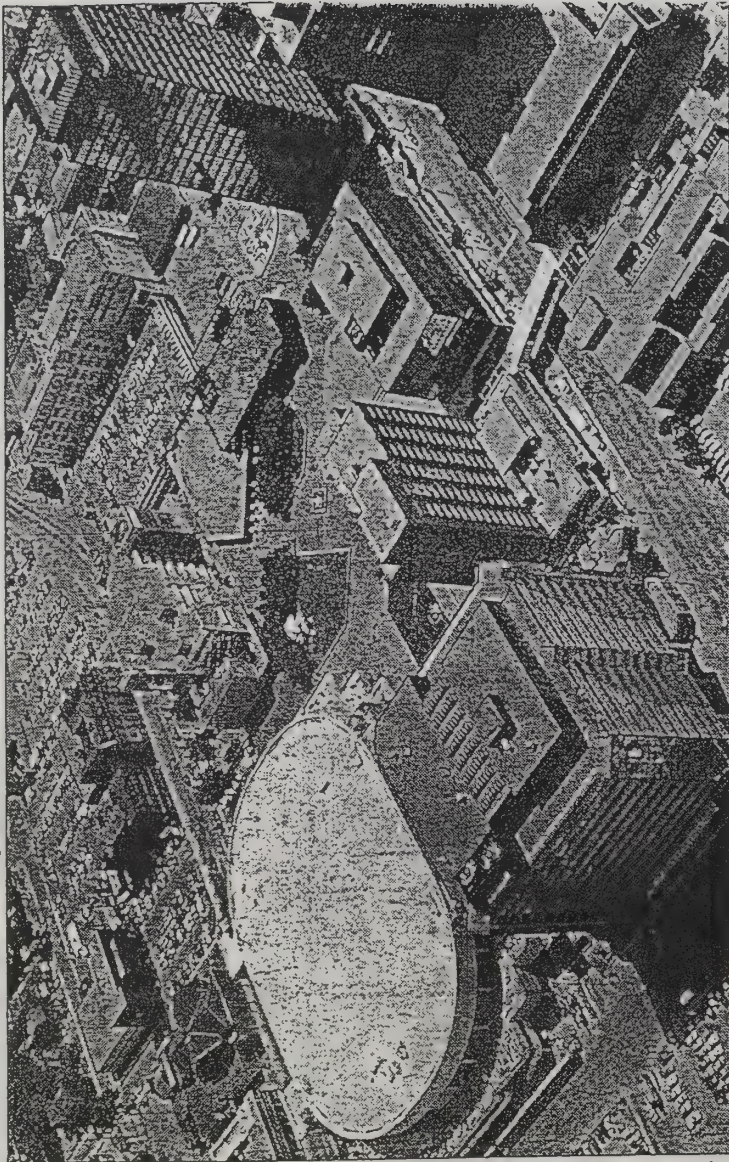
Our rigid system of land use controls stems from the assumption that a building's original use will remain constant for the life of the building.

Zoning flaw

We agree with the Toronto urbanist Jane Jacobs who believes that "the greatest flaw in city zoning is that it permits monotony. Diversity itself is then unnecessarily suppressed."

This suppressed diversity is at the root of the current economic problems in downtown Hamilton.

We may wince at considering a made-in-Toronto solution for downtown Hamilton problems. But these



It would make sense for Hamilton to loosen rigid downtown land use controls in an attempt to turn underutilized industrial and commercial buildings into more usable, taxable spaces, argue Robert Miller and Leah Wallace.

has encouraged many demolitions.

The city of Toronto is proposing to do away with most land use restrictions in these areas and rely instead on built-form controls.

In addition, density limits will cease to be used and a greater reliance will be placed on zoning to control building form, height and scale.

Once the land use restrictions are removed, existing buildings can be used for many new, diverse and previously prohibited activities, such as com-

bined work-living units.

There are always arguments for the status quo, but in light of the obvious crisis downtown, it would make greater sense for Hamilton to loosen or remove the spectre of rigid downtown land use controls.

The anatomy of "death in the city" exposed by Jane Jacobs, over 30 years ago can revert to "life breaking out in the city" if we are prepared to make the necessary adjustments to allow it to happen.

Nov. 4, 1998
Toronto
on brink
of radical
rezoning

Plan would allow
multi-use of land

BY JOHN ALLEMANG
The Globe and Mail

TORONTO — Seeking a new life for abandoned industrial buildings scattered across two decaying downtown districts, Toronto has come up with a radical plan to dispense with restrictions on land use, one of municipal government's most hallowed controls on development.

If Mayor Barbara Hall gets her way when the issue comes before council on Monday — and the near-unanimity already apparent among politicians, city planners and the private sector suggests she will — the development of property in the historic King-Spadina and King-Parliament areas will be largely deregulated. Entire districts now designated as industrial on city maps would be thrown open to almost any use at all.

"It's an acknowledgment that the city is a highly dynamic organism," said urban planner Ken Greenberg of Berridge Lewinberg Greenberg, who worked on the project with the mayor. "You can't freeze-frame reality through municipal zoning."

The changes expected early in 1996 — civil servants are working furiously to reach agreement on implementing them — aim at turning dilapidated turn-of-the-century factories into airy Manhattan-style loft buildings to repopulate and revitalize the inner city. The regulations would allow tenants to live and work at the same address, to foster new businesses and revive moribund neighbourhoods.

Toronto is not the first city to encourage such a mixed-use environment, where a sculptor lives and works side by side with a wine importer and a graphics designer. The lofts of New York and Chicago, familiar as movie sets and lifestyle-magazine backdrops, set the tone for this ultra-urban way of life in the eighties. But what makes the Toronto experiment almost revolutionary is the city's will to repeal zoning regulations on such a grand scale.

"We're going to bring these buildings back to life," said developer Larry Saltsman of WTF Group, standing inside a drab old belt factory that he plans to remake into apartments — average price, \$140 a square foot.

Rezoning being mulled by Toronto

♦ From Page A1

"The buildings will become vibrant again and that will make the streets vibrant too."

His six-storey Classical red-brick building, with its 12-foot ceilings and expansive windows, is typical of the area that once was the centre of Toronto's garment trade and printing industry (and still shelters The Globe and Mail). Although one floor of Saltsman's factory is occupied by old and dormant presses, the other five sit empty. Many of the city's industries failed to survive the double blow of free trade and the recession. Others relocated to cheaper and more efficient factories in the suburbs.

"Jobs go or stay for other reasons," said Paul Bedford, Toronto's deputy planning commissioner. "It has nothing to do with zoning."

The industries that have remained make do with century-old layouts that no longer suit a modern business: intrusive columns, ceilings that put limits on machinery and storage space, confined shipping and receiving areas, small and creaky freight elevators, restricted parking.

In spite of these limitations, and pressure from owners such as Mr. Saltsman to allow new uses for the attractive if outmoded buildings, Toronto long resisted changes to its land-use regulations. Even as new high-technology companies such as sound studios or computer design firms sought space in the downtown, politicians fought the disappearance of the city's industrial tax base and the loss of jobs for its blue-collar workers. In the mid-1980s, for example, they decided to dub the King-Spadina district the Fashion District, and erected street signs in trendy magenta, cerise and maroon that they thought would convey this message of hope to the business world.

But global economic forces refused

to bend to Toronto's good intentions. Many buildings were converted into cheap but sometimes dangerous illegal lofts. And as employment in the fashion industry fell, the number of occupied industrial units dropped from 357 in 1988 to 182 in 1993.

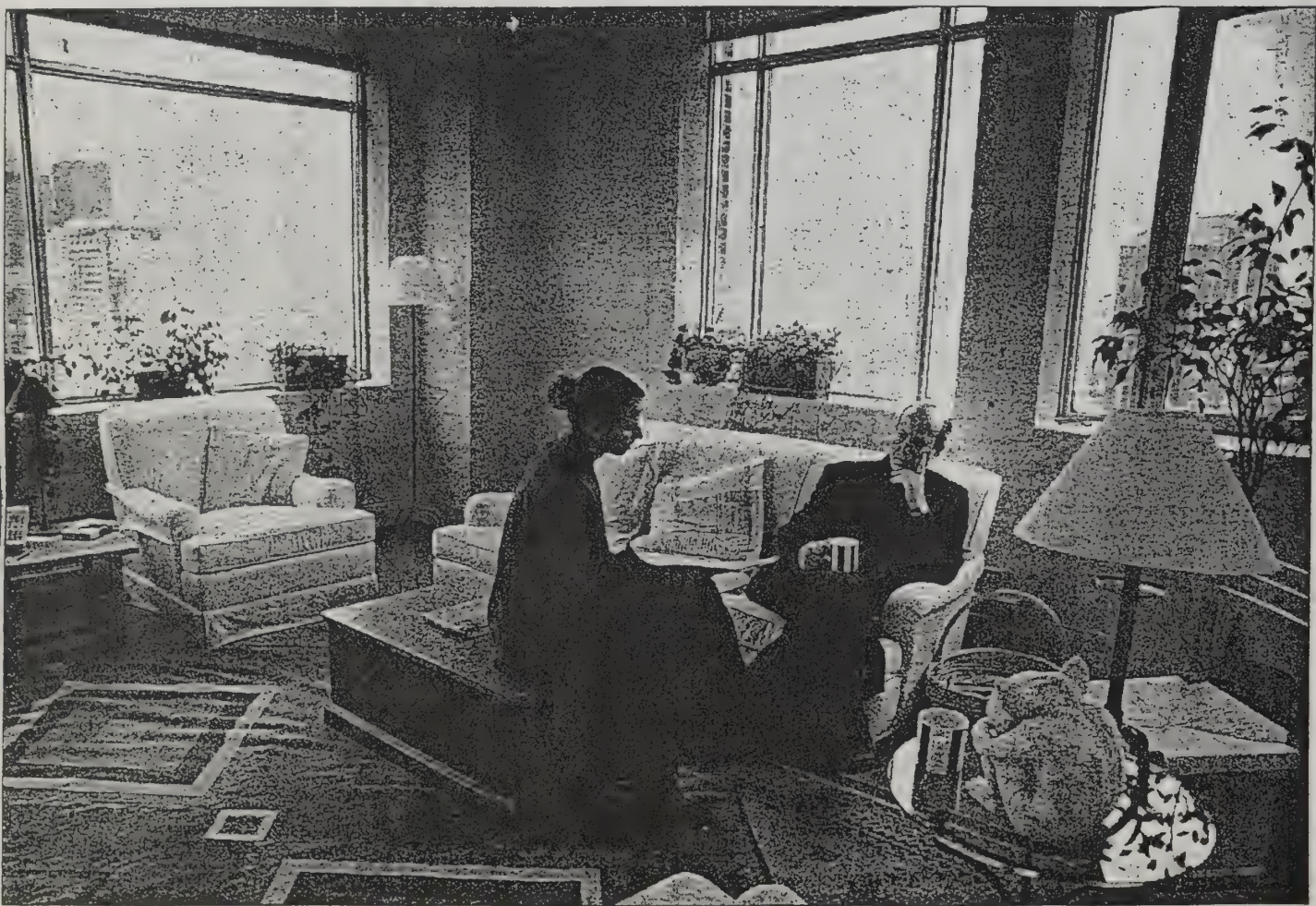
"This was the consequence of hanging on to the ideology of land use enshrined in planning," Mr. Greenberg said. "We had hundreds of thousands of square metres of vacant buildings and the whole downtown area was in a partial state of paralysis."

Some determined owners were able to win permission to adjust the terms of their zoning — after city officials mulled over such questions as whether landscape architects could be classified as industrial workers — but the process was slow and expensive. In the three years it took to convert an industrial building to offices, for example, the commercial real-estate market might have dried up.

Although the old buildings frustrated industrial users, they clearly appealed to people who coveted lofts and studios like those found in New York's SoHo and TriBeCa districts. But Toronto found it hard to discard the accumulated principles of urban planning.

Combining home and work environments, in particular, had long been considered unacceptable in Toronto. When the city drew up its Official Plan in 1953, it made a point of setting apart industrial, residential and commercial areas. No one, city planners decided in their sweeping benevolence, should have to live near the smokestacks of industry.

The organizing principle — the urban workplace is nasty — had developed as a reaction to the excesses of the Industrial Revolution. Turning their backs on the noisy, messy cities they saw around them, progressive planners and architects tried to create



This setting at Louder Music and Sound Design in the Balfour Building on Spadina Ave. in Toronto is an example of what renovations can do to old warehouse spaces.

(TIBOR KOLLEY/The Globe and Mail)

ideal communities that behaved in an ordered and reasonable way. Leafy garden suburbs, bringing the fresh air of the country to the city, were one product of this thinking; the isolated tower blocks of public housing, designed to rescue the poor from dirty inner-city hovels, were another.

"It was a nutty idea of what cities are," said author Jane Jacobs, whose urban philosophy inspired the Hall plan. "All cities used to mix their uses. That's what made them economic. They would probably never have formed otherwise."

Ms. Jacobs is scornful of former planning practice that had bu-

reaucrats looking ahead 15 years and trying to regulate a city's development.

"You couldn't bring up children that way or run a business. What makes you think you can run a city like that? The more important thing is to know how to adapt. If every building that had lost its original use had no use, then the city would be full of great, barren places."

Critics say Ms. Jacobs underplays the problems that will result from a gung-ho approach to mixed use. They say the city has jeopardized the future of the garment industry, which will face rent hikes, to say nothing of noise

complaints, as young professionals move into their renovated lofts. Politicians also worry that further deregulation may lead to business and industry invading their tree-lined neighbourhoods. "There's a risk we may discover the reason why we instituted use-based zoning," cautioned Kate Lazier of the mayor's office.

But Ms. Jacobs and her supporters say existing rules on such areas of conflict as noise, parking, pollution and architectural detail can resolve problems more successfully than an all-powerful zoning bylaw.

"As long as the design of the building doesn't overwhelm the street,"

said architect Jack Diamond, "what does it matter if people are cutting hair in one place or making computer chips in another?"

If Toronto, at a time when government coffers are empty, is to reclaim the title it once gave itself of The City That Works, it will be thanks to the rare harmony of purpose that the flagging economy seems to have stimulated.

"The city doesn't have a lot of monetary resources at this point," Mr. Greenberg said. "But it still has people with ingenuity. If we can put to use the building resources we do have, we'll get astonishing synergies."

Planners look to recapture Toronto's urban destiny



Toronto

John Barber

parking available because so many people will move to more commodious suburbs, and the resulting decay will demand L.A.-style defensive measures for all those unlucky enough to be left behind. And it won't be Hazel McCallion's fault.

What to do?

Surprisingly, one of the best-articulated strategies for recapturing Toronto's urban destiny is emerging

within the city's planning department. This is surprising because the planning department has long played a central role in the suburbanization of Toronto — blithely protecting, controlling and repressing while ignoring an increasingly desperate need for revitalization.

Indeed, the department has been very successful in reflecting the city's culture back on itself. But now Paul Bedford, assistant to planning commissioner Robert Millward, wants to change the picture entirely.

"We are a city, not a suburb," Mr. Bedford said recently. "It's healthy to have the sidewalks crowded with people. Let's not spend all our time worrying about parking."

"Toronto suffers, in my view, from a lack of enough people, of enough congestion and urbanity. I think we have our collective head space mixed

up between partial urban and partial suburban."

The majority of Torontonians want the urban goodies while living a suburban existence, according to Mr. Bedford. "I think that's a dilemma."

Mr. Bedford was one of the officials most responsible for codifying Mayor Barbara Hall's initiative for the "Kings," removing obsolete zoning controls in two decaying districts centred on King and Parliament and King and Spadina. He has also drawn inspiration from a trip he and Mr. Millward made to New York City late last year.

There, the Toronto planners discovered a regulatory regime in which parking is not required but banned from new development, where illuminated signs are rejected for being insufficiently bright and where long-empty old buildings are springing back to life in the most astonishing

ways.

Big Apple investors have discovered that derelict industrial lofts are ideal locations for "big-box" retailing — five floors of home furnishings, for instance — and you don't need 7,000 parking spaces to make them work. They are transforming old marine terminals into driving ranges and banks into bookstores.

"Hockey with a view," Mr. Bedford said, showing a picture of New Yorkers playing shinny on a new ice pad high above the Hudson River. "How urban can you get?"

"It's a different mindset," he added. "You get so insular in Toronto. You think you're the centre of the universe. You're not. In many ways, you're in big trouble."

It was New York planning commissioner Joseph Rose who helped these Torontonians understand the larger

context. He reminded them that there are only about half a dozen urban places left in North America (Toronto included, provisionally) and that if they don't capitalize on their urbanity they will fade away.

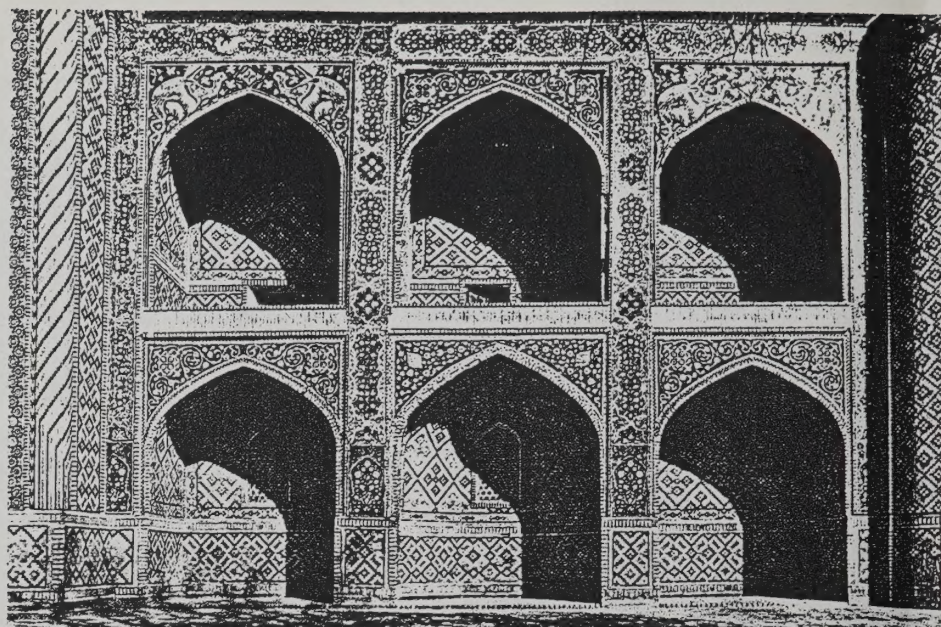
It's depressing to consider that there are so many Torontonians who would welcome that fate, who can't imagine New York as a positive model and whose only demand of their city is that it remain "livable."

Livable was the great cry when it appeared that urban change was beyond control. Now that stagnation looms, livable doesn't quite make it. Any suburb is bound to be more livable than any city. There has to be something more.

Toronto has the potential to be a great city. But it just doesn't have what it takes (parking!) to be a decent suburb.

News

Canadian Architect's January Update



IN BRIEF

Mexican Agreement. The RAIC has signed a formal agreement with FCARM, its Mexican counterpart, to collaborate on professional and cultural development. The institutes will set up professional and student exchanges, develop seminars and conferences, and organize exhibitions in both countries. The agreement lays the groundwork for the time when licensing reciprocity is agreed, talks for which are still ongoing.

Liberation for a downtown. Toronto is poised to take a revolutionary turn in development and planning, with a proposal to eliminate land use restrictions on two large tracts of industrial land east and west of the core. Author Jane Jacobs and planner Frank Lewinberg were two members of the task force that got the ball rolling on the idea last fall. The proposal has already received city council approval in principle, and is shortly to go to the Land Use Committee and then on to council for approval. It affects two pockets about 250 acres each south of Queen Street between Simcoe and Bathurst streets, and Jarvis to the Don River. Owners of new or existing properties would have as-of-right privileges to use them for any purpose, so that a shop, a nightclub, a factory and residences could cohabit on the same street, even in the same building. The proponents of this scheme expect that not only will development thrive in this liberal soil, but it will produce colourful and lively neighbourhoods characterized by the happy confusion of traditional quarters like New York's Soho.

COMPETITIONS

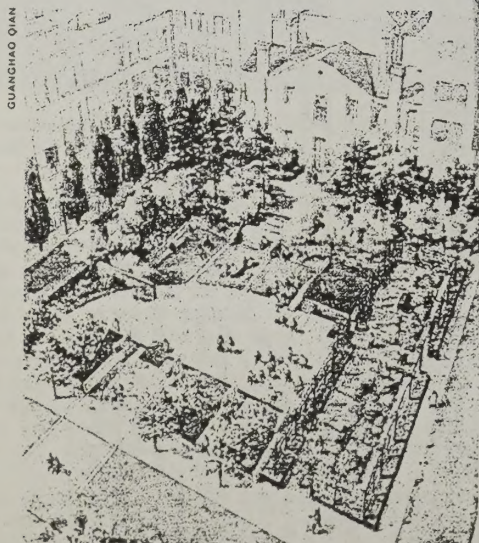
Court House Square. Winners in the limited design competition for Court House Square in Toronto's historic St. Lawrence district were announced in December. Janet Rosenberg and Associates Landscape Architects in association with Carruthers Shaw and Partners Archi-

Above: Tile facade of the Nadir Divan Begi Madrasa in Bukhara Old City, Uzbekistan. The restoration of Bukhara was one of 12 projects to receive a 1995 Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Below left: Court House Square, Toronto by Karen Rosenberg/Carruthers Shaw.

itects won the competition to revive one of the city's oldest civic spaces behind an 1830s courthouse off Court Street. Their scheme has a formal paved entry court to the courthouse, and a larger paved area near the street, which is defined by an espalier and a herb garden. A black plinth recalls a time when public announcements and hangings were held near the site, one of several historical references.

The jury unanimously recommended the winning scheme to the city for approval. Other shortlisted architect/landscape architect teams in the competition were: Brown Storey Urban and Environmental Landscapes/Ian Grey; Fleisher Ridout/Hotson Bakker; Moorhead/Stephen Teeple/The Second Concession; and Vertechs Design/public thing international. The jury included architects William N. Greer and Pat Hanson, and professional advisor was Stephen G. McLaughlin.

Ideas Challenge. Winning teams in the CMHC Ideas Challenge competition have been announced. The aim of the competition is to find ways of improving the design of residential high-rises which are currently showing an appalling rate of failure. In Ontario, for example, over half of new condominium buildings develop problems in their first two years, and 95% of the claims are due to moisture damage. As well, a high-rise apartment typically consumes as much energy as a detached house of the same size, despite having fewer external walls. The finalist schemes demonstrate various methods of achieving good durability, energy savings and environmental characteristics. The winning teams ➤ 8



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